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10/584,385	06/26/2006	Katsuji Aoki	2006_0982A	8995
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SMITH, LINDA B				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/584,385

Applicant(s)

AOKI ET AL.

Examiner

LINDA B. SMITH

Art Unit

2862

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 June 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 8-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 June 2008 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/26/2008

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Amendment A, received on 6/26/2008 has been entered into record.
2. Claims 1-15 are now pending.

Priority

3. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Specification

4. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the abstract should not make reference to the prior art or any comparison to the prior art. The abstract of the disclosure exceeds the maximum allowable length of 150 words as specified below. The abstract contains legal phraseology found in claims as such "comprising" and "wherein" which should be avoided.

Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

5. Applicant is reminded of the proper content of an abstract of the disclosure.

A patent abstract is a concise statement of the technical disclosure of the patent and should include that which is new in the art to which the invention pertains. If the patent is of a basic nature, the entire technical disclosure may be new in the art, and the abstract should be directed to the entire disclosure. If the patent is in the nature of an improvement in an old apparatus, process, product, or composition, the abstract should include the technical disclosure of the improvement. In certain patents, particularly those for compounds and compositions,

wherein the process for making and/or the use thereof are not obvious, the abstract should set forth a process for making and/or use thereof. If the new technical disclosure involves modifications or alternatives, the abstract should mention by way of example the preferred modification or alternative.

The abstract should not refer to purported merits or speculative applications of the invention and should not compare the invention with the prior art.

Where applicable, the abstract should include the following:

- (1) if a machine or apparatus, its organization and operation;
- (2) if an article, its method of making;
- (3) if a chemical compound, its identity and use;
- (4) if a mixture, its ingredients;
- (5) if a process, the steps.

Extensive mechanical and design details of apparatus should not be given.

6. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

Claim Objections

7. Claim 14 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 14 pointing to a method claim does not specifically layout the actual steps within the claim or does it disclose the structure that is performing the steps of adjusting the position of the hypothetical imaging zone. .Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

8. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

9. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The claims are drawn to a computer program per se. A computer program per se is abstract instructions. Therefore, a computer program is not a physical thing (product) nor a process as they are not “acts” being performed. As such, these claims are not directed to one of the statutory categories of invention (See MPEP 2106.01), but are directed to nonstatutory functional descriptive material.

It is noted that computer programs embodied on a computer readable medium or other structure, which would permit the functionality of the program to be realized, would be directed to a product and be within a statutory category of invention, so long as the computer readable medium is not disclosed as non-statutory subject matter per se (signals or carrier waves).

Double Patenting

10. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned

with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

11. Claims 1-15 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-25 of copending Application No.

11/115,152. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the basic device "camera terminal" comprises the same components within both applications. The inventive concept or objective of the application '152 and instant application '385 seeks to accomplish the same results.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

The table below seeks to identify which claims in application '152 and instant application '585 are the identical and which are not identical but contain the same essential components.

Application No. 11/115,152	Instant Claim (10/584,385)
1. A detection area adjustment apparatus comprising camera terminals that are connected to each other via a communication line, wherein said detection area adjustment apparatus enables taking images in a target detection area by adjusting positions of detection areas that are imaging areas of said camera terminals, each of said camera terminals includes: a camera that takes an image in a detection area included in the target detection area and adjusts the position of the detection area; a communication unit operable to send, to said camera terminals	1. A camera terminal constituting an imaging zone adjusting apparatus that adjusts an imaging zone using multiple camera terminals, comprising: a camera that images a hypothetical imaging zone that is a hypothetical imaging zone obtained by changing the position of an imaging zone within a specific zone in a specific period of time; an adjusting unit operable to adjust the position of the hypothetical imaging zone by controlling said camera; and a communication unit operable to send/receive hypothetical imaging zone information indicating the hypothetical imaging zone, wherein said

<p>other than said camera terminal, detection area information for specifying the detection area via the communication line, and operable to receive detection area information from said other camera terminals; and an adjustment unit operable to adjust the position of detection area by controlling said camera of said camera terminal so that a total area of the detection areas of said camera terminals covers the entire target detection area, based on (i) the detection area information on said camera terminal, and (ii) the detection area information that said communication unit receives, from said other camera terminals.</p>	<p>adjusting unit is operable to adjust the position of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs based on the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs provided with said adjusting unit and the hypothetical imaging zones of the other camera terminals indicated by the hypothetical imaging zone information received by said communication unit so that a combined zone of the hypothetical imaging zones of said multiple camera terminals completely covers a specific imaging target zone. (<i>see claim 1 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>2. The detection area adjustment apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said adjustment unit is operable to adjust the position of the detection area so as not to leave a non-detection part in a part that is adjacent to the detection area of said camera terminal, the non-detection part being a part that does not belong to any of the detection areas of said camera terminals.</p>	<p>3. The camera terminal according to claim 2, wherein said adjusting unit is operable to adjust the position of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs so that the overlapping zone quantity that is the quantity of a zone where the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs and a hypothetical imaging zone adjacent to said hypothetical imaging zone overlap converges on a target quantity that is a fixed quantity larger than 0. (<i>see claim 2 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>3. The detection area adjustment apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said adjustment unit is operable to adjust the position of the detection area so that an overlap area amount matches a predetermined target amount that is 0 or more, the overlap area amount being an amount of overlap areas of (i) the detection area of said camera terminal and (ii) the detection areas of said other camera terminals, the detection areas being adjacent to the detection area.</p> <p>4. The detection area adjustment apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said</p>	<p>4. The camera terminal according to claim 3, wherein said adjusting unit is operable to repeat a step of selecting a hypothetical imaging zone adjacent to the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs among the hypothetical zones of said multiple camera terminals, a step of calculating the overlapping zone difference quantity that is the difference between the overlapping zone quantity of the selected hypothetical imaging zone and hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs and said target quantity, and a step of calculating the position of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs that leads said overlapping zone</p>

<p>adjustment unit is operable to adjust the position of the detection area of said camera terminal to a position that is obtained by repeating: selecting the detection area that is adjacent to the detection area of said camera terminal, from detection areas of said other camera terminals; calculating an overlap area differential amount that is a difference between the overlap area amount and the predetermined target amount, the overlap area amount being an amount of overlap area of selected adjacent detection area and the detection area of said camera terminal; and calculating a position of the detection area of said camera terminal, the position enabling the overlap area differential amount to be close to 0.</p>	<p>difference quantity to 0, whereby the position of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs is adjusted for the position obtained by said repeated steps. (<i>see claims 3 and 4 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>5. The detection area adjustment apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said adjustment unit is operable to calculate the overlap area differential amount by using a function that takes a smallest value when the overlap area amount equals to the predetermined target amount.</p>	<p>5. The camera terminal according to claim 4, wherein said overlapping zone difference quantity is a quantity that is minimized when the overlapping zone quantity and said target quantity are equal. (<i>see claim 5 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>6. The detection area adjustment apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said camera can adjust the position of the detection area within a certain range, and the function takes a smallest value when the overlap area amount equals to the target amount in the case where the detection area of said camera terminal is within the certain range.</p>	<p>6. The camera terminal according to claim 2, wherein said camera comprises a unit operable to change the imaging cycle in which said hypothetical imaging zone is repeatedly imaged, and said adjusting unit is further operable to adjust the position and imaging cycle of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs so that the imaging cycle of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs and the imaging cycles of a hypothetical imaging zone adjacent to said hypothetical imaging zone are nearly equal. (<i>see claim 6 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>18. The detection area adjustment apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising: a synthesis unit operable to obtain images that</p>	<p>8. The camera terminal according to claim 2, wherein said imaging zone adjusting apparatus further includes: a merging unit operable to</p>

<p>said cameras of said camera terminals have taken and operable to synthesize the taken images as a spatially continuous image; and a display unit operable to display the synthesized image.</p>	<p>obtain images captured by the cameras of said multiple camera terminals and merge them into a spatially continued image; and a display unit operable to display the merged image. (<i>see claim 18 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>8. The detection area adjustment apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said camera includes a unit operable to adjust a spatial resolution of the detection area, the detection area information includes information for specifying the spatial resolution of the detection area, and said adjustment unit is operable to control said camera of said camera terminal and operable to adjust the position and the spatial resolution of the detection area so that a total area of the detection areas of said camera terminals covers the entire target detection area and the spatial resolutions of the detection areas of said camera terminals become substantially the same, based on (i) the detection area information on said camera terminal, and (ii) detection area information that said communication unit receives, from said other camera terminals.</p>	<p>9. The camera terminal according to claim 1, wherein said adjusting unit is further operable to adjust the position and aspect ratio of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs so that the aspect ratio of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs becomes a specific target quantity. (<i>see claim 8 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>23. A detection area adjustment method used in a camera system including cameras that can adjust positions of detection areas that are imaging areas and camera terminals that have communication units respectively operable to communicate detection area information indicating detection areas of said cameras, said detection area adjustment method enabling taking images in a target detection area by controlling positions of detection areas, said detection area adjustment method comprising adjusting, by said camera terminals, positions of detection areas by controlling said cameras of said</p>	<p>14. An imaging zone adjusting method in a camera terminal constituting an imaging zone adjusting apparatus that adjusts an imaging zone using multiple camera terminals, wherein said camera terminal includes a camera that images a hypothetical imaging zone that is a hypothetical imaging zone obtained by changing the position of an imaging zone within a specific zone in a specific period of time and a communication unit operable to send/receive hypothetical imaging zone information indicating said hypothetical imaging zone, and said imaging zone adjusting method comprises a step of adjusting the position of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the</p>

<p>camera terminals so that a total area of detection areas of said camera terminals covers the entire target detection area, based on (i) the detection area information on said camera terminal, and (ii) the detection area information that said communication unit receives, from said other camera terminals.</p>	<p>camera terminal belongs based on the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs and the hypothetical imaging zones of the other camera terminals indicated by the hypothetical imaging zone information received by said communication unit so that a combined zone of the hypothetical imaging zones of said multiple camera terminals completely covers a specific imaging target zone. (<i>see claims 23 & 24 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>24. The detection area adjustment method in the camera system according to claim 23, wherein each of said cameras includes a unit operable to adjust the spatial resolution of the detection area, the detection area information includes the information for specifying the spatial resolution of the detection area, and in the adjusting, the positions and the spatial resolutions of the detection areas are adjusted by controlling said cameras of said camera terminals so that the total area of the detection areas of said camera terminals covers the entire target detection area and spatial resolutions of the detection areas of said camera terminals become substantially the same, based on (i) the detection area information on said camera terminal, and (ii) the detection area information that said communication unit receives, from said other camera terminals.</p>	<p>15. A program for a camera terminal constituting an imaging zone adjusting apparatus that adjusts an imaging zone using multiple camera terminals, said program causing a computer to execute the step included in the imaging zone adjusting method according to claim 14. (<i>see claim 25 of '152</i>)</p>
<p>25. A program for camera terminals that is used in a camera system including cameras that can adjust positions of detection areas that are imaging areas and camera terminals that have communication units respectively operable to communicate detection area information indicating detection areas of said cameras, said program being intended for camera terminals that enable taking images in the target detection area by adjusting the positions of detection areas, said program</p>	

causing a computer to execute the adjusting of positions of detection areas by controlling said cameras of said camera terminals so that a total area of detection areas of said camera terminals covers the entire target detection area, based on (i) the detection area information on said camera terminal, and (ii) the detection area information that said communication unit receives, from said other camera terminals.	
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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

12. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

13. Claims 1, 2, and 9-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sakai et al. (US PG Pub. No. 2005/0078184 A1 and hereinafter Sakai).

14. As to claim 1, Sakai discloses a camera terminal constituting an imaging zone adjusting apparatus that adjusts an imaging zone using multiple camera terminals, comprising: a camera that images a hypothetical imaging zone that is a hypothetical imaging zone obtained by changing the position of an imaging zone within a specific zone in a specific period of time (**0035, 0049, 0053, 0060, lines 1-7 and 0064**); an adjusting unit (**22**) operable to adjust the position of the hypothetical imaging zone by controlling said camera (**0044, lines 4-11**); and a

communication unit operable to send/receive hypothetical imaging zone information indicating the hypothetical imaging zone **(0042)**, wherein said adjusting unit is operable to adjust the position of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs based on the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs provided with said adjusting unit and the hypothetical imaging zones of the other camera terminals indicated by the hypothetical imaging zone information received by said communication unit so that a combined zone of the hypothetical imaging zones of said multiple camera terminals completely covers a specific imaging target zone (**Figs. 5 & 6, 0053-0057, 0071 and 0079, lines 5-12**).

15. As to claim 2, Sakai discloses wherein said camera repeatedly images said hypothetical imaging zone **(0060)**.

16. As to claim 9, Sakai discloses the camera terminal wherein said adjusting unit is further operable to adjust the position and aspect ratio (**i.e. image resolution**) of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs so that the aspect ratio of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs becomes a specific target quantity **(0065-0066)**.

17. As to claim 10, Sakai discloses wherein said aspect ratio target quantity is an aspect ratio determined by the position of the imaging zone and the installation points of the camera **(0066 and Figs. 4, 6-8)**.

18. As to claim 11, Sakai discloses an imaging zone adjusting apparatus that adjusts an imaging zone using multiple camera terminals, said apparatus comprising multiple camera terminals **(abstract, 0049 and Fig. 1)**.

19. As to claim 12, as best understood Sakai discloses a sensor terminal constituting a detection zone adjusting apparatus that adjusts a detection zone using multiple sensor terminals, said apparatus comprising: a sensor (i.e. **CCD**) that detects physical quantities within a hypothetical detection zone that is a hypothetical detection zone obtained by changing the position of a detection zone within a specific zone in a specific period of time (**0036, 0038, 0049, 0053, 0064 and Fig. 1**); an adjusting unit (**22**) operable to adjust the position of said hypothetical detection zone by controlling said sensor (**0042 and 0044, lines 4-11**); and a communication unit operable to send/receive hypothetical detection zone information indicating said hypothetical detection zone (**0042**), wherein said adjusting unit is operable to adjust the position of the hypothetical detection zone to which the sensor terminal belongs based on the hypothetical detection zone to which the sensor terminal belongs provided with said adjusting unit and the hypothetical detection zones of the other sensor terminals indicated by the hypothetical detection zone information received by said communication unit so that a combined zone of the hypothetical detection zones of said multiple sensor terminals completely covers a specific detection target zone (**0053-0057, 0079, lines 5-12 and Figs. 5 & 6**).

20. As to claim 13, as best understood Sakai discloses wherein said sensor repeatedly detects physical quantities within said hypothetical detection zone (**0060**).

21. As to claim 14, as best understood Sakai discloses an imaging zone adjusting method in a camera terminal constituting an imaging zone adjusting apparatus that adjusts an imaging zone using multiple camera terminals, wherein said camera terminal includes a camera that images a hypothetical imaging zone that is a hypothetical imaging zone obtained by changing the position of an imaging zone within a specific zone in a specific period of time and a communication unit

operable to send/receive hypothetical imaging zone information indicating said hypothetical imaging zone (**0042-0044, 0060, lines 1-7 and 0064**), and said imaging zone adjusting method comprises a step of adjusting the position of the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs based on the hypothetical imaging zone to which the camera terminal belongs and the hypothetical imaging zones of the other camera terminals indicated by the hypothetical imaging zone information received by said communication unit so that a combined zone of the hypothetical imaging zones of said multiple camera terminals completely covers a specific imaging target zone (**0053-0057, 0077, 0079, lines 5-12**).

22. As to claim 15, as best understood Sakai discloses a program for a camera terminal constituting an imaging zone adjusting apparatus that adjusts an imaging zone using multiple camera terminals, said program causing a computer to execute the step included in the imaging zone adjusting method (**0041-0044**).

Allowable Subject Matter

23. Claim 7 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Prior Art Made of Record

24. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- a. Endo et al. (US Patent No. 6,950,120 B1) discloses camera layout for acquiring images used in panoramic synthesis.
- b. Anderson (US Patent No. 6,657,667 B1) discloses a method and apparatus for capturing a multidimensional array of overlapping images for composite image generation.
- c. Yoshida et al. (US PG. Pub. No. 2005/0206726) discloses a monitor system and camera which uses a plurality of sensor terminals.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LINDA B. SMITH whose telephone number is (571)270-3827. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 7:30AM-5:00PM EST..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Assouad can be reached on (571) 272-2210. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Linda B Smith/
Examiner, Art Unit 2862

/Patrick J Assouad/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2862